



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/803,660	03/18/2004	Frederic Bauchot	FR920020086US1	6005

32329 7590 04/21/2006

IBM CORPORATION
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW
11400 BURNET ROAD
AUSTIN, TX 78758

EXAMINER

TSUI, WILSON W

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2178

DATE MAILED: 04/21/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/803,660	Applicant(s) BAUCHOT, FREDERIC	
	Examiner Wilson Tsui	Art Unit 2178	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 3/18/2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action is in response to the application filed on 3/18/2004, preliminary amendment filed on 3/18/2004, and preliminary amendment filed on 8/4/2004.
2. Claims 1-11 are pending. Claims 1, 10, and 11 are independent claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

3. Claim 11 is rejected on the basis that the claimed "computer program product" appears to be directed to a "computer program per se" without being embodied in a computer readable medium. Since the computer program not embodied on a computer readable medium is non-statutory subject matter, see MPEP 2105 below:

(a) Functional Descriptive Material: "Data Structures" Representing Descriptive Material *Per Se* or Computer Programs Representing Computer Listings *Per Se*

Data structures not claimed as embodied in computer-readable media are descriptive material *per se* and are not statutory because they are not capable of causing functional change in the computer. See, e.g., Warmerdam, 33 F.3d at 1361, 31 USPQ2d at 1760 (claim to a data structure *per se* held nonstatutory). Such claimed data structures do not define any structural and functional interrelationships between the data structure and other claimed aspects of the invention, which permit the data structure's functionality to be realized. In contrast, a claimed computer-readable medium encoded with a data structure defines structural and functional interrelationships between the

data structure and the computer software and hardware components which permit the data structure's functionality to be realized, and is thus statutory.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claim 1 recites the limitation "the numeric operands" in line 18. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.
5. Claim 1 recites the limitation "the operators" in line 18. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.
6. Claim 2 recites the limitation "the computed mathematical expression" in lines 4-5. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Salas et al (US Patent: 5,317,686, published: May 31, 1994) in further view of Hatakeda et al (US Patent: 6,057,837, published: May 2, 2000, filed: Jul. 15, 1997).

With regards to claim 1, Salas et al teaches a method for data entry into the content of cells belonging to an output field, said data being expressed as a

Art Unit: 2178

mathematical expression of the cell contents of at least one input field in a data multidimensional table used by a data management application, said table comprising cells arranged as a grid of records and fields, each cell corresponding to the intersection of one record with one field, each cell being identified by a cell address and comprising a cell content, said table having one specific record in which each cell content is entered as a unique character string label identifying each table field, said method comprising the steps of:

- a) *Entering labels corresponding to the at least one input field and a label corresponding to the output field, said later label being expressed as the mathematical expression of said labels of said at least one input field* (column 8, lines 6-26: whereas, each cell is identified by a cell name/label, and mathematical expressions are expressed for a cell, using values from other cells (input cells)). Furthermore, the mathematical expressions assigned for an output field comprise one or more labels assigned to one or more input fields (Fig. 4a, reference number 45).
- b) *Parsing the label of the output field into a mathematical expression by identifying the numeric operands, the operators and the at least one existing input field label* (column 12, lines 35-57, Fig. 4a, reference number 45: whereas, item names/input labels are parsed in the mathematical expression, along with "numeric values, textual values, reference notations, and mathematical operators/functions").
- c) *Translating in the mathematical expression, the at least one existing input field label into the address of the cell containing the at least one input field label* (columns 15 and

Art Unit: 2178

16, lines 63-68 and 1-4 respectively: whereas, the textual address of a cell (input field label) is translated into an address of the cell (index map address).)

d) Pasting the result of the mathematical expression used for the output field(s), from values of input cell(s) belonging to the same record (Fig. 4a: whereas, the values computed in an output cell are derived from each record's input cell value. For example, each record is represented by the "box" formed by intersecting the 'Sports' category and the 'Ford' category).

However, although Salas et al teaches translating labels for an input cell for a particular record as explained above, Salas et al does not teach for each cell of the output field, *pasting in the cell content the translated mathematical expression and replacing in said pasted mathematical expression each cell address of the at least one input field label by the cell address of the at least input field belonging to the same record.*

Hatakeda et al teaches for a *cell of an output field, a mathematical expression showing each cell address of at least one input field belonging to a same record* (Fig. 3d, reference number 102').

It would have been obvious to one of the ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Salas et al's method for parsing a mathematical expression and translating input field labels for each record to further use the same data to paste a mathematical expression containing input field addresses for a particular record as taught by Hatakeda et al. The combination of Salas et al and Hatakeda et al would have

Art Unit: 2178

allowed Salas et al to have reduced "the labor involved in editing references in cell data" (column 5, 1-2).

With regards to claim 2, which depends on claim 1, Salas et al teaches a method for *replacing the output field cell contents by the computed mathematical expression applied to the cell contents corresponding to the cell addresses of the at least input field belonging to the same record*, as similarly explained in claim 1, and is rejected under the same rationale.

With regards to claim 3, which depends on claim 1, Salas et al teaches a method for *repeating the preceding steps to compute the content of the cells of any additional output field in the table, wherein said content can be expressed as a mathematical expression of the cell contents of at least one input field* (Fig. 4a: whereas, there are multiple records that also use the mathematical expression in reference number 45. All these records are shown to have been computed, and thus as shown, the steps for computing have been repeated for multiple output cells as well).

With regards to claim 4, which depends on claim 1, Salas et al teaches a method wherein *the step of parsing the label includes a transformation of cell content type from a character string into a computable mathematical expression* (Fig 4a: whereas, a character string from the output label (reference number 28), is parsed to determine the validity of the expression (column 12, lines 12-14), and also broken down into a computable mathematical expression by "combining numeric values, textual values, reference notations, and mathematical operators/functions" and stored into appropriate output cells (column 12, lines 46-53)).

With regards to claim 6, which depends on claim 1, Salas et al teaches a method *further comprising an initial step of selecting the input and output fields forming the data multidimensional table in a larger data multidimensional table* (column 10, lines 49: whereas, the selection of input and output fields selected/referenced by using an expandable referencing scheme, such that the input/output fields can be selected in a larger multidimensional table).

With regards to claim 7, which depends on claim 1, Salas et al teaches a method wherein *after the step of entering labels, the following steps are executed only if a further step of starting computation of the cell contents of the output field is triggered* (column 18, lines 29-34: whereas, the computation of cell contents are triggered when the "structure of dimensions, the number of dimensions, or any user-supplied mathematical expressions are changed by the user, the math module is invoked" to compute the cell contents of affected output cells).

With regards to claim 8, which depends on claim 1, Salas et al teaches a method wherein *the fields and records are respectively the columns and rows if the data multidimensional table is vertically arranged or are respectively the rows and columns when the data multidimensional table is horizontally arranged* (Fig. 3a).

With regards to claim 10, *for a data processing system comprising means adapted for carrying out any one of the steps of the method according to claim 1*, is similarly explained in the rejection for claim 1, and is rejected under the same rationale.

With regards to claim 11, *for a computer program product comprising programming code instructions for executing the steps of the method according to claim*

1, is similarly explained in the rejection for claim 1, and is rejected under the same rationale.

8. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Salas et al (US Patent: 5,317,686, published: May 31, 1994) and Hatakeda et al (US Patent: 6,057,837, published: May 2, 2000, filed: Jul. 15, 1997), in further view of MATHCAD (MathSoft Inc., published: August 1999, pages 140-141).

With regards to claim 5, Salas et al teaches a method wherein, the mathematical expressions used for the output cells include mathematical operators and functions (column 12, lines 46-53). However, Salas et al does not teach *wherein the mathematical expression comprises complex operators developed as functions in the data management application*.

MATHCAD teaches a method wherein *the mathematical expression comprises complex operators developed as functions in the data management application* (pages 140-141: whereas, customer operators are defined (page 140) and developed as functions and are used in a data management application (page 141)).

It would have been obvious to one of the ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Salas et al's system such that the mathematical expressions included custom defined operators developed as functions as taught by MATHCAD. The combination of Salas et al, Hatakeda et al, and MATHCAD would have allowed Salas et al's system to have allowed users the convenience of using custom defined operators without explicitly defining frequently used or complex mathematical functions/expressions.

9. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Salas et al (US Patent: 5,317,686, published: May 31, 1994) and Hatakeda et al (US Patent: 6,057,837, published: May 2, 2000, filed: Jul. 15, 1997), in further view of Hashemi (US Application: US 2003/0212804 A1, published: Nov. 13, 2003, filed: May 9, 2002).

With regards to claim 9, which depends on claim 1, Salas et al teaches a method for:

- a) Selecting cells in a multidimensional table, as explained in the rejection for claim 6.
- b) *Selecting a record*, as explained in the rejection for claim 1, and is rejected under the same rationale.

However Salas et al does not teach a method for selecting *the specific record in the data multidimensional table is respectively the top record in a vertically arranged table and the first left record in a horizontally arranged table*.

Hashemi teaches selecting a *record in a multidimensional table is respectively the top record in a vertically arranged table* (paragraph 0091: whereas, the top row is selected).

It would have been obvious to one of the ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Salas et al's record selection system to have further used the method of selecting a top record in a vertically arranged table as taught by Hashemi. The combination of Salas et al, Hatakeda et al, and Hashemi would have allowed Salas et al's system to have used a method of data access in the order of how the multidimensional table records were listed (vertically).

However, Salas et al and Hashemi do not teach accessing the first left record in a horizontally arranged table. Nevertheless the method of transposing rows to columns, is notoriously well known in the art. The Examiner takes OFFICIAL NOTICE of this teaching. It would have thus been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Salas et al, Hatekeda et al, and Hashemi before him at the time the invention was made, to have modified the method for accessing a top record in a vertically arranged table, taught by Salas et al, Hatekeda et al, and Hashemi; to further have implemented a transposed method of accessing the same record in a vertically arranged table, as is known in the art. It would have been advantageous to one of ordinary skill to have utilized this combination such that the method of data access was in the order of how the multidimensional table records were listed (horizontally).

Conclusion

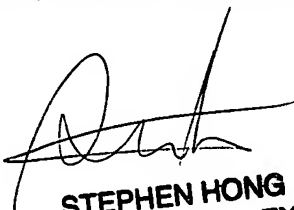
10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- Anderson et al (US Patent: 5,416,895, published: May 16, 1995, filed: Apr. 8, 1992): This reference teaches using cell alias/labels in place of the actual cell address.
- Miller et al (US Patent: US 2003/0120999 A1, published: Jun. 26, 2003, filed: Dec. 21, 2001): This reference teaches the benefits for using mathematical expressions without using formulas.
- Hogan et al (US Patent: 5,414,809, published: May 9, 1995, filed: Apr. 30, 1993): This reference teaches access of data specific to a record.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Wilson Tsui whose telephone number is (571)272-7596. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stephen Hong can be reached on (571) 272-4124. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



STEPHEN HONG
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

Wilson Tsui
Patent Examiner
Art Unit: 2178
April 3, 2006